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Lessie Shively

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TRANSCRIPTION OF
TAPED INTERVIEW WITH
MRS. LESSIE SHIVELY
OF CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA

Part of Requirement of Anth 455

Dr. Simpkins

May, 1973

by Gary A. Jarrett

INTRODUCTION

The attached material is the transcription of an interview with my aunt, Mrs. Lessie Shiveley, of Charleston, West Virginia.

Mrs. Shively was born July 19, 1902, in Richard Hollow, a narrow valley north of Charleston in the county of Kanawha. She was the ninth of eleven children and was the surviving twin.

Richard Hollow is sort of a sub-area of Whiteman's Fork where the family made its home. Mrs. Shiveley's level of formal education is not precisely known, but I don't believe she completed two, three or more years in school. She is very knowledgeable, however, in the techniques of rural farm living and although being seventy-two years of age she and her husband, Pete Shiveley, still put out a small vegetable garden in their small backyard every spring.

She married Pete Shiveley in the early 1920's and they moved to a small farm on Tupper's Creek, a rural area a few miles from her birthplace. She gave birth to one child which died shortly after birth and she was never fecund thereafter.

Around 1950 she and her husband moved from their farm on Tupper's Creek to her mother's home in Charleston, West Virginia. This was necessary in order for her to take care of her ill and aging mother.

She and her husband Pete reside in Charleston at present. The focus of her life is her religion and she attends church at every opportunity. She is still surprisingly strong and able and enjoys very much scowering the hillsides for wild greens which she preserves by canning.

Gary A. Jarrett

The following is a transcription of an interview conducted on April 28, 1973, in Charleston, W.Va. The interviewee is Mrs. Lessie Shively.

Q. Where were you born?

A. Richard Hollow.

Q. I was under the impression it was Aaron's Fork.

A. Well, it was Whiteman's Fork.

Q. And that was up Elk River?

A. Yes.

Q. When were you born?

A. 1902.

Q. Do you remember the exact date?

A. 19th of January.

Q. How many were in your family, brothers and sisters?

A. There were six girls, five boys.

Q. And grandma and grampa?

A. Yes.

Q. So there was thirteen of you living in one house?

A. Yes.

Q. What kind of a house did you live in?

A. A three room house.

Q. Did you build the house or did you buy it?

A. My daddy built it.

- Q. Where did gramma and grampa get their land? Did they inherit it?
- A. Daddy bought it from Lyfis Elkins. He worked for 50¢ a day and paid for it.
- Q. Do you remember anything about your grandmother or grandfather?
- A. Oh yes. I recollect my grandmother Jordon and grandmother Landers, too.
- Q. Were they originally from that part of the country?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Do you remember your grandmother's maiden name?
- A. No. My grandmother Landers was a Bostic before she was married.
- Q. Where was grampa Jordon's people from? (Mrs. Shiveley's father)
- A. Grampa Jordon, I think, was from east Virginia.
- Q. You don't know where in east Virginia he came from?
- A. No.
- Q. Did he ever mention anything about his grandparents?
- A. No.
- Q. Did your mother have any sisters or brothers?
- A. I recollect a Miller that lived out on Tupper's Creek, Elehew Miller. He married a Baldwin woman and he died. She is still living and she's 102 years old.
- Q. And she lives where?
- A. She lives on Grape Vine, goes to church and Sunday school.
- Q. What is the earliest thing you can remember?
- A. When I was three years old.
- Q. And what happened?
- A. I come out on the porch and my mother told me not to. I run down off the porch off the step and set down beside the steps. We had a dog and he grabbed me by the ear and jerked it plum loose from my head. My daddy run and took it and caught it and beat its brains out against a rock.

Q. Do you remember your grandparents living around there when you were a kid?

A. You mean grandma Landers? Yes. We lived right close to her. I used to go down there and she would make me shoestrings. She would tear up a black string and roll it in her hands and make me shoestrings. I'd go down there and help her work every day. Mom would Whoop me every night when I got home, but I'd go back the next day.

Q. So you weren't supposed to go down there?

A. No. She would whoop me every night when I'd go in, but in the morning I'd forget it and she would send me after a bucket of water and I'd sit the bucket down by the spring and go down to grandma's.

Q. Was there very much of a road where you lived?

A. No. Just in the creek.

Q. I guess there weren't too many cars back then?

A. No. Why it would scare you to death to see a car comin.

Q. How did people get around?

A. Went horse and buggy, and rode horses.

Q. You went to church quite a bit when you were growing up, didn't you?

A. Went when I had to go barefooted.

Q. How far was the church from where you lived?

A. About a quarter of a mile.

Q. Did the church have a regular preacher?

A. Yes.

Q. He just stayed at that church all the time?

A. Yes.

Q. What kind of a church was it?

A. It was a Pleasant Valley Advent church.

Q. Did you go to church quite frequently?

A. Yes. In 1949 that's where I went and I was saved, and at that same church I was baptised right above the church in a hole of water.

Q. Did people get married in the church out there?

A. No, I don't reckon I ever seen anybody get married in the church.

Q. Where did people get married?

A. They just went to the preacher or the minister.

Q. Did he have a house near the church?

A. Yes. And get married there. Preacher Will Marion was our pastor for years and years. He was so good they wouldn't vote him out.

Q. Did they have to vote for the preacher?

A. Oh, yes. You got to vote in the church. Like you have a pastor and then another pastor thinks he wants it, well he comes in there and they have votes and everyone stands up for this man and stands up for that man. The one that gets the most standin up gets the church.

Q. Did the preachers have any kind of special training?

A. No. But, Lord, they preached the holy gospel. They was called from God. They didn't have to go learn to be a preacher. The good Lord called them.

Q. Were the preachers just your neighbors?

A. Yes. My daddy and Will Marion went to church together, and they went around every time they heard of a man being sick. They went and prayed with his daddy. I don't know how many nights a whole gang of them would go and visit people. They said they was sick and they were afraid he would die and be lost. And they went and prayed with him and sung with him. That's the way they done all the time. They mostly had a singin school there at the church and one night a week they would have singin, you know, they'd go and practice singin. They had a choir all the time. We had good churches. Far more better churches than they do now. They just play a lot of church now, they just play it.

Q. How do you mean that?

A. Well, it ain't all the holy spirit (now). They take lots of people in and let them sign a card and say 'now you're a Christian.' Well, you ain't because you don't know God. You've got to know God. You've got to get down on your knees and pray and ask God to forgive you. Whenever he dips his love in your heart, you'll know it. They don't nobody have to pull you up and tell you that you've been saved, you know it.

Q. It just sort of happens all of a sudden?

A. Yessiree! It's just the same as being born into the world a little baby.

Q. How many people went to your church?

A. Oh, it was full.

Q. Just about everybody went?

A. Yes. Everything on that creek. Everybody up on Whiteman's Fork and everybody up on Aaron's Fork always went, and then you know outsiders would come. Like at Leatherwood they'd have a meetin' over there one night and then a meetin' at Aaron's Fork the next night. People could go to and from and visit other churches. That's the reason they had a church full all the time.

Q. Did you know of any families that just didn't go to church?

A. Oh, no. Never did know of none. Everybody went. The first time I started to church, Lyfis Elkins told my daddy, said why don't you take Lessie to church. He said she ain't got nothing to wear, nothing but an outing cloth dress. And said, Eda (Mrs. Shiveley's mother) has to wash it every night for her to wear the next day. And he said well if that's all that youngun needs, he had a store you know, had cloth and hit was 3¢ a yard, the goods was, and he give me enough to make me a dress, a slip, panties and things to go to Sunday school in. Ma said every Sunday morning I'd go down through there and the dust running up through my toes. Said she could track me down through the bottom going to church, just goin' a flyin'.

Q. Did all the brothers and sisters go to church?

A. Yessir, every one of them. My mother, I've seen her shout from Aaron's Fork church plum up to our house, way over a mile.

Q. Doint what?

A. Shoutin'!

Q. You mean in church?

A. Yes.

Q. Is that what people do in church?

- A. Yes, honey, well they do when they get happy. When the Lord pours the spirit out on you, you don't know where you're at. That's something that comes from God.
- Q. Did they take up a collection in church?
- A. Yes, they had to buy lamp oil and they had to paint the church and they had to paint the benches and they had to get stuff to clean the floor. They wouldn't take up more than \$2 or \$3 every Sunday. They had to buy coal to furnish the church with coal. Had old lamp lights.
- Q. What did the preacher live on?
- A. He made his own livin'. He wouldn't have took a dollar no way. You couldn't have poked it in his pocket and made him took it.
- Q. Was he sort of a farmer too?
- A. Yes. He lived right there below my daddy and when Dad died, Earl (her brother) went out there and asked Will Marion, said 'Will, I want you to preach Dad's funeral', said 'Yes, I'm more than glad to,' he said. He shouted that day he preached my daddy's funeral. He said I know I'll meet Andrew in heaven, said I know I will. See, Dad had backslid and got drunk and carried on but he got back to the Lord before he died. Nobody didn't tell Will about it either. He said he prayed and asked the good Lord the night before he preached my Daddy's funeral he said 'Lord, will I preach him in heaven or will I preach him in, I don't know where he's at', said 'no, he'll be with me in paradise'.
- Q. Did they usually have the funerals in the churches?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did you ever go to a funeral where the preacher had anything bad to say about the deceased?
- A. No, I never did. Oh, I heared them say that they might be in hell. I've heared them say that. But, I don't think a preacher ought to not say that, he ought to say that they are left in the hands of a just God.
- Q. Say that a man was a drinker and mistreated his family. Would they give him the same kind of funeral as they would any other man?
- A. No, they couldn't. No, you know just like if you had been a good boy all your life and I couldn't say a harmless word about you, well I couldn't. And then here would come another boy along and he'd done all kinds of wrongs, well, I couldn't say something good about him, could I?

If I was going to tell the truth, I would just have to say, no, he does things that he ought to not to do.

Q. What does the preacher say about somebody like that?

A. Well, they'd say that we've left him in the hands of a just God. Of course, they don't know, you see, some people could die like that and maybe that they got to the Lord, the Lord's a merciful God. He said 'who shall ever call upon my name that I won't no ways nigh cast, he won't be an outcase, or I'll take him in,' and a lot of people they say is lost, and we don't know it. Not 'til the day of judgment, and we all meet in heaven, we'll know it then.

Q. Where does a new young married couple go to live? Do they usually have some place to go?

A. They usually have a place to go before they get married. They used to.

Q. Did you and your husband have a place to go when you got married?

A. We stayed with Mom. Boarded up there at Dad's.

Q. You had a pretty good house full, then didn't you?

A. Oh, yes, we had a house full.

Q. Were your Mom and Dad farmers when you were growing up?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you sell anything that you grew?

A. No. We put it up to eat through the winter.

Q. What all did you grow?

A. We growed potatoes and beans, just everything that every body raised on a farm.

Q. Was there good bottom land, or was most of it hillside?

A. Most of it hillside.

Q. How did they plow the hillside?

A. With a horse and plow.

Q. What kind of things did you put up for the winter?'

A. We put up beans, dried beans, dried apples, canned apples, made applebutter.

Q. How about soap?

A. Yes, my mother made soap. Raised her hogs, had her own meat, sausage and had our own cows, milk and butter.

Q. Do you remember when the depression came in the twenties? Did things get kind of hard on you all out there?

A. We didn't live out there then. We lived in town then. He (her husband) made \$4 a week and that's what we lived on. Of course, we had our milk, our butter and eggs and we lived off of \$4 a week.

Q. Where did the \$4 come from?

A. From the WPA.

Q. Did he work for the WPA here in town?

A. No, it was out on Tupper's Creek.

Q. What did they do out there?

A. They worked on the roads.

Q. Was there a lot of people out there working for the WPA?

A. First one man and then another. One would get one day's work, you see they just got one day's work a week.

Q. What did you do for things you didn't grow yourself?

A. We done without.

Q. Was there a kind of a trading store out there?

A. Oh, yes, there was a grocery store where we got our groceries. We raised our corn and went to mill.

Q. How do you sulphur apples?

A. Well, you just peel them, put them in a jar and put your sulphur in something else and strike a match to it; when you get it to burning just put it down in the bottom of the jar and put you a cloth over the top of it to hold all that smoke in the jar.

Q. How long do you let it burn?

A. Let it burn about all day and then them apples turn just golden yellow and they'll keep for two years.

Q. What kind of apples do you use?

A. We usually used solid apples, kind of a solid one. You can't take a mellow one. If you do it will just mash up. We dried beans and dried apples, made applebutter, raised potatoes and holed them up, pick apples and hole up about 30 or 40 bushel of apples. Go into them all winter. Haul walnuts and have walnuts to crack all winter.

Q. That was a snack for you?

A. Yes, that was our bedtime snack.

Q. How did all of you sleep in three rooms?

A. I don't know. Let me see, there was 5 beds, and in the kitchen she (her mother) had a great big long table and seven or eight chairs on one side and a big bench on the other side. I've seen her backs as high as 40 and 50 biscuits for one meal. Brother, we had to get out of the bed early on Sunday morning just the same as we did on Monday morning. Get out and get ready and get our work done and get ready to go to Sunday school.

Q. Where was the school house out there?

A. About three miles from where we lived.

Q. How did the kids get to school?

A. Walked.

Q. Where did the teachers come from?

A. Old man Floyd Paddock taught school for years on top of years. Well, he did ever since I started. He lived right there on the creek.

Q. How many grades were there in the school?

A. I think there were six grades.

Q. Where did you have to go after you finished the sixth grade?

A. You had to go to Elkview.

Q. Did many of your brothers and sisters finish school out there?

A. No. Clyde quit in the second grade and he come in here and went to school. Earl went to the sixth grade and that's as high as he went. He never was on the inside of a high school house. I bet you he could put down figures that you couldn't do nothing with.

Q. How about the girls?

A. Well the girls, they didn't get much of an education either. All of them got more than I did.

Q. Did gramma and grampa ever make you go to school?

A. No. I'd go a while and then Mom would make me stay there and help her put up canned stuff or pick beans. We'd go and pick as high as 12 and 14 big sacks of beans at a time and I'd just get so far behind, so I just quit and went to doin' housework for people. When I was thirteen years old, I went to doin' housework for people.

Q. What kind of work did you do for them?

A. Took care of the house just like anybody would.

Q. Were there any wealthy people that lived out there?

A. Yes. Abe Hugert lived up around there on Aaron's Fork. He had plenty. And old man Bat Fogletree, he had oodles of money.

Q. Where did they get their money?

A. Old man Bat Fogletree got it from his parents. Old man Bat was Abe Hugert's wife's father, and that's where she got it. They had about 7 or 8 hundred acres of land up in that holler, and built a \$40,000 brick home up there years ago, and what would it be worth now?

Q. When you had a girlfriend, how did you court?

A. Well, just sit around and hugged and kissed.

Q. Where did you do this?

A. We always had a livingroom, everybody did, you know. And, as Grampap Jordon said, just jam-sweated a little bit. He told my sister Ruth that one time he told Ma, he said, he was goin' to court an old woman, you know, and Ma made him a date with her. Ruth said she kept on watchin' and he said 'what's wrong with you, Ruth', she said, 'I want to see how you jam-sweat, Grampa'. He called courtin' jam-sweating.

Q. Where did boys and girls meet out there?

A. Well, mostly at the church. They would take girls home from church, you know. Take on behind them on a horse if the creek was up. Most of them met at the church.

Q. Did you usually have to get approval from the parents to come courting?

A. Yes, we had to know that our parents would let us have a boyfriend. I was about nineteen years old before ever I went with anybody. Grovey and Lottie was about twenty before ever they went with anybody. Ever bit of twenty.

Q. Did neighbors help one another out out there?

A. Yessiree. Absolutely did. If anybody got sick, all the men gathered up and went and helped them plow and plant their crops and put it up. Any, then if they didn't get able to work, why they would work it for them the first time. Now they won't come to see you, will they?

Q. Who had the responsibility of looking after the kids? Did the older kids have to look out after them?

A. Yes, had to help, yes.

Q. Did the kids get whippings very often?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. Did you get very many?

A. Oh, yes. Got plenty of them. I was mean.

Q. What did you do to get a whipping?

A. Oh, I done lots of things. I put the dogs after the cows one time and got a whipping over it. And, I rocked a man one time. Me and Grovey got up in the barn loft and rocked a man. He was goin' along the road, and we got a whipping over that. Just lots of things we done.

Q. Did people really like new babies when they came?

A. They'd go for miles and see new babies. I reckon my brother Earl was the only one, my mother whipped him one time and my daddy never did lay the weight of his hands on him and he said that Earl never did give him a word of sass.

Q. Who did most of the whipping when it came time to be done?

A. Mom done most of it. She never did no when to quit. But, Dad, he'd just give us 2 or 3 big licks and that was the last of it.

Q. Did the neighbors ever whip anybody's kids for doing something?

A. No.

Q. What did you do for entertainment, like on a Saturday night?

A. We went to church on Saturday night. We'd go over there where Pete lived on Tupper's Creek on Saturday night, and then on Sunday we'd go down to Aaron's Fork church. Then, on Sunday evening we'd go back to Tupper's Creek to meetin', to Sunday school, and then on Sunday night we'd go down to our own church.

Q. How did people sit in church? Did the men sit on one side and the women on the other?

A. Yes, the men sit on one side and the women on the other.

Q. Where did the kids sit?

A. They just sit scattered all over the place. But, everybody's children went to church.

Q. Did you enjoy going to church when you were a kid?

A. I sure did. I just thought that was just as important as a day's work was.

Q. How did your husband come to court you?

A. Come riding a horse. Leave every Sunday night just a singin'. He was afraid to go through a patch of woods. Leave a singin' just as loud as he could sing. Said one night he heard something coming down through the woods, said he whipped his old horse and run it ever so far. He was scared to death.

Q. What did he think it was?

A. He didn't know what it was. He started through the cemetery one night and he said he heard something screaming. It was an old tomcat. Said he and Otto took back down Grape Vine and run 'til they couldn't run.

Q. Did women do a lot of men's work?

A. I reckon they did. They went out on the hills every day and worked, pretty near every women did and done a man's work. I've done everything but plowing. I've worked in hay, I've binded oats, I've cut corn, I've shucked corn. Done everything in the world that a man could do but plow and I never did. I tried it once and got aggravated and just threwed it down and said that's one thing I'll never try again. And I didn't.

Q. I want to ask you about music. Did people play music out in the country?

A. Some times people used to have old graphophones they called them and would come through the country and play music for people. A lot of boys used to play the french harp.

Q. I know that gramma was a Republican. Were most people out in the country Democrats or Republicans?

A. Most of them, pretty near everything out there was Republicans, but Dave Hugert. He was a Democrat for forty years. He'd go around and ask little boys, he'd give them a nickel if they'd vote Democrat ticket, by jackies! He said he didn't get nowhere, said he couldn't get a thing. And him just turned over and was a Republican from then on.

Q. What did the people out in the country think of President Roosevelt?

A. I wasn't out there then. Oh, yes I was. Well, I don't know, I just never did hear anybody say much about him.

Q. Did people argue politics very much out in the country?

A. Nobody but Dave Hugert, you knowed Dave, didn't you? Poor old feller, he'd kid me all the time. Sometime people would listen to the election returns. That's about all you ever heard anything about.

Q. Did politicians or people running for office ever come out there and campaign?

A. I don't think so. If they ever did, I never did know it.

Q. Where did you vote out there when you went to vote?

A. We went down to the school that set right beside the road. It was a two room school. And, you didn't know where Roscoe Miller's store was out there, did you? It's right where you turn up on the other prong of Tupper's Creek. No, you never heard much talk about politics.

Q. Did you know of anybody out there that ran for office?

A. No.

Q. What did people do for law enforcement out in the country? Were there any sheriffs or constables?

A. Well, usually there was a constable out on Sissonsville road.

Q. Did you have a lot of trouble with people stealing things?

A. Oh, yes, we've had a lot of things stole from us but we never did try to get it back, cause we knowed if they'd steal it that they'd beat us and so we just let them go.

Q. Was there a lot of that going on?

A. No, just once in a while you'd hear of something like that, somebody stealing your chickens. Just a bunch of boys out having a good time, or having a cookout or something like that, and they'd come to your henhouse and get maybe 7 or 8 or 10 hens and get them and cook them.

Q. Did you ever know anybody that got into any real trouble out there?

A. You mean did I know of anybody ever getting killed or anything? I knowed of Ransford Slater killed his cousin. Stuck a knife in his throat there. Cut that big jugular vein into. He just laid there and died.

Q. What did they fight over?

A. Over a can of tobacco. It was on election day. One of them told the other, said 'get up and more, I want to see if I can find my tobacco' and he said 'I'm not a sittin' on it.' The other one said 'yes you are' and he said 'no I ain't', and so he got out and started to the restroom and this other boy got out and followed him. He seen him flip a big knife and the blade come open and hit him right there and staggered him, but it didn't do know good, he just come right on to him and socked that knife right in his neck and cut that big jugular vein. We come along two minutes after it happened. The undertakers done got there and covered him up, and Pete said 'that looks like my cousin and he raised the sheet up and there it was, a Spencer boy, Georgie Spencer.

Q. When did you and Uncle Pete move into town?

A. I couldn't tell you.

Q. What did you miss the most after you moved off the farm into town?

A. I missed everything. I missed milking my cows and feeding my chickens, working in the garden. You was just a little bit of a thing when we moved into town.

Q. You moved in to take care of gramma?

A. Yes. It's been about 15 years ago, ain't it?

Q. Were there any coal mines out there?

A. There were out on the Clarkson Jordon farms.

Q. Did you know any people that worked in the mines?

A. One of my cousins, Clarkson Jordon, had a coal bank and worked in it. He's dead now. They stripped his mine. He dug out a lot of coal and they stripped it.

Q. Didn't the gas company find some gas out there on grandma's old place?

A. Yes, there's a gas well out there.

Q. Did they just come in and ask you if they could drill for gas?

A. Yes.

Q. When they found the gas, did they offer to pay you for it?

A. Yes, they paid her for a long time, but since Mom died there's not been a soul up there to pick up the checks.

Q. In other words, they're still supposed to be paying for it?

A. Yes, they are supposed to be paying \$4 every four months.

Q. Is that what they agreed on when they found the gas?

A. No, she used to get when they first came in, she got around \$200 a month. It just kept dropping down and dropping down.

Q. Did they ever tell you why they quit giving her that much?

A. No. They just said the gas had gone down. There was too many houses getting gas.

Q. Did you ever have a lawyer or anybody talk to the gas company?

A. No, they just come and asked Ma if they could drill there, and she signed up for them to drill.

Q. Did you ever travel very much?

A. No.

Q. Where is the farthest place you've ever been from here?

A. Ashland, Kentucky.

Q. When did you go there?

A. My boyfriend took me.

Q. How did you go?

A. We went in a car.

Q. Do you remember who had the first car out there?

A. Dr. Bill Walker had the first car, our family doctor.

Q. Traded his seven horses in on it, huh?

A. Yes. No, he kept one horse, one that could swim good, that could swim the creek over there.

Q. How far did you live from the hard road?

A. About 9 miles, I think.

Q. Did you go to Charleston very often?

A. Yes, we went pretty often, every month.

Q. What did you come into town for mostly?

A. Well, to get things that they didn't have out there in the country. Dad had a brother that lived in here and he come in here all the time. And his Daddy and Mother lived in here.

Q. I know that Pete (her husband) used to do a lot of peddling. Did you need that money to live on?

A. Yes.

Q. You couldn't live on just what you grew yourself?

A. No, sold milk and butter every week. Sold about 20 pound of butter and 26 or 27 gallons of milk.

Q. Were you ever able to save any money?

A. No, never did save none. So many people beat him, never would pay him. He'd sell it on credit and never get nothing out of it.

Q. Did a lot of people buy on credit out in the country?

A. Yes.

Q. What would happen if somebody couldn't pay?

- A. They just couldn't pay it. We set down and counted up after we moved in here that if people would pay him what they owed him he'd have \$400. But, he never did get a penny of it. We used to kill beefs, great big old cows. We had a big heffer one time and killed here. Brought us \$200 and he got beat out of two-thirds of it. Sell it on credit! We'd fatten big old hogs weighed 4 and 500 and take them out there at Christie's and grind them up for sausage and sell it at 60¢ a pound, now he didn't let none of that go out on credit. He told them it was either money, or just stay away from our truck. It just went like hotcakes.
- Q. What time of the year did you do your planting, put your garden up?
- A. Oh, May, June July.
- Q. It was a lot of work, wasn't it?
- A. Yes. It was work from the time it quit snowing 'til snow fell that fall.
- Q. What did you do all winter?
- A. Sit by the fire and eat up what we'd raised. And jam-sweat a little bit!
- Q. Did you have a lot of company in the winter time?
- A. Yes, we would have company.
- Q. What did you do when company came.
- A. We'd sit around by the fire and pop popcorn and talk.
- Q. Did the women talk to the women and the men talk to the men?
- A. Yes, they'd just all sit and talk together. Then we'd go to our neighbors and eat dinner on Sunday and they'd come and eat dinner with us.
- Q. Do you remember any games that you played when you were kids?
- A. Yes, we played hide-and-go-seek, played post office. Get to kiss one another. I think that's the first kiss I ever go off of Pete was playing post office.
- Q. Did you ever know of any of the girls out in there that had babies and weren't married? Was there very much of that?
- A. Not very much. I had a cousin, she had a baby and never was married. I didn't know what in the world, didn't know what to think of it. I asked Mom how she got it.

Q. What did she tell you?

A. She didn't tell me nothin'. She just went on like she didn't hear me. Women didn't tell their girls things like that, you know, then. But now they learn it to them in school.

Q. How did kids find out about things like that out in the country?

A. Oh, I don't know how they found it out. Maybe older ones would tell them.

Q. What's a feathertick?

A. It's a thing that's like a mattress, only it's a thing that's full of feathers.

Q. And you put them on the bed and sleep on them?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you put them over you or do you sleep on them?

A. No, you put them under you. You never did see one, did you?

Q. How old were you when you started using snuff?

A. About 8 or 10 years old. Still eating it yet!

Q. Did a lot of people use snuff back in the country?

A. Oh, yes. I was the only one in the family that used it. Just about all the rest of them smoked.

Q. How did old people make a living out in the country when they got too old to farm?

A. They just set around and always had somebody to wait on them.

Q. Who waited on them?

A. Well, always their children would take them in and wait on them.

Q. Usually they'd go live with one of their kids?

A. Yes, or one of their kids would come and live with them, cause then there wasn't no nursing homes nor nothing like that to take old people to. But I don't think I'll ever have to go to a nursing home cause I ain't never going to get old. You're as old as you think you are, ain't you?

Q. What do you think is the biggest difference in what the church was out in the country and what it is here in town?

A. I think that it used to be that people lived close to God. They could ask God for anything, and He would do it. And now so many of them is just playing, as Ma Bess says, a using God for a crutch. Now you know Jackie (her niece) told Earl one time, she said, Uncle Earl, she said I went to church and I was saved, but said I don't feel nothing. And Earl said, do you feel like if the Lord would come you could go on up to heaven? and she said, no I don't. And he said you come with Mrs. Whaley (her mother-in-law) to church Sunday. And they got her down there and got to praying with her, and she said when she got saved said she knowed she got it. Said, didn't nobody have to come and tell her, said she went to a Baptist and they told her, said you done knelt down now and ask God to forgive you, said come on, said and sign this card, said you alright, and said she wasn't. Said she didn't have a bit more when she got up than she had when she knelt down there. And if I'd give you a \$100 and you didn't know you had it, it wouldn't do you no good, would it? That's just like Christianity.

Q. Where most people baptised?

A. Yessir.

Q. Was the church you went to, the only church out there?

A. No. There was one on Whiteman's Fork and one on Grape Vine and one on Leatherwood, one on Tupper's Creek; every little creek, you know, had one.

Q. Where they all the same kind of church?

A. No. Some of them was Baptist, some of them was Methodist, some of them Advent.

Q. And you just went around to all of them?

A. Yes, I don't believe in a holding to none of them. I believe that's this man made-up stuff here on earth and if you've got your heart right with God, that's all you need. If you know God, that's all you need. You just need enough to get into heaven. If I can just squeeze in, I'll be satisfied. I'm goin' to look for some of my people that was gone, I'm goin' to be a lookin' for them.

Q. Did people dance much in the country?

A. Oh, yes, they used to have square dances all night long. Never seen a dance in my life until after I was married. My Dad and Mother never would allow us to go to a dance.

Q. Why?

A. They claimed that that wasn't nice to go to dances.

Q. Did they ever tell you why it wasn't nice? Was it against their religion?

A. Yes, I reckon it was. And they thought it was wrong to dance.

Q. Where did they hold these dances?

A. Around where they'd had picnics, you know, and had water-melon feeds; just first one thing and then another.

Q. Did you ever dance?

A. No, never did try it. No, my daddy used to say that ever time they'd have a dance there would be somebody there drunk and there'd be somebody fall out and somebody get killed, and maybe somebody would get cut all to pieces, and that's the reason he never would let us go. Said it was a bad place to go. Never seen a square dance in my life 'til after I was married.

Q. Were there a lot of people who got divorced out in the country?

A. No, never heard tell of it. Never would hear tell of no man and woman having any trouble. Of course, they might have had a lot of trouble and kept it sneakin', not a let nobody know.

(The following is an anecdote related by Mrs. Shively during the interview.)

Q. Just exactly what happened?

A. Well, he (her husband) went down to the restroom.

Q. What did you call it out in the country?

A. We called it a johnny house.

Q. First of all, where was it built?

A. Right on the edge of the creek bank. And, he went down there and the place where you sit down, you know, was tore up. I drove some stakes and put some planks there and you got upon it like a chicken on a roost. There was a stake there and he was holding by it. Well, I reckon he started to go backwards, and backwards he went that stake broke off that he was holding on to, right backwards he went, took him and johnny house right down into the creek up to his neck. He come a walkin' out of there, said, 'Oh, Lord, I'd rather be dead, I wish somebody would shoot me. Had his hat in his hand and manure was all in the crown of his hat. He had on a pair of overalls and the whole pile was in it. Oh, Lord', he said, 'shoot me, shoot me!'. It was cold, too, as cold as it was today.

Q. Was it in the winter time?

A. Yes, in the winter time. There wasn't a dry thread on him. The water was just a running out of him. He had to wade in water plum up to around here. Don and Larry told Bessie, said Uncle Pete come pretty near getting killed this evening. Said Aunt Lessie laughed 'til she cried. I couldn't keep from laughing, swear to God, I laughed 'til I was sick at my stomach. I heard old johnny house a crackin, I looked around and over the hill it went, just tumble, tumble, tumble, and I wondered where in the world Pete was at. Here he come crawling out of that water.

Q. What did you have to cook on out there?

A. Wood stoves.

Q. What did they look like?

A. They was made out of iron, every bit of them, out of cast iron, I think's what it was.

Q. How did they work?

A. Well, you had to put wood in them to heat them. Then you put your bread down in under where you had your fire, the firebox up here, and then your oven was down here where you baked your bread.

Q. Did you ever cook bread on top of the stove?

A. I fried it in the skillet.

(Mrs. Shiveley is going to tell about coon hunting)

We'd go about every night or two, everytime it was damp, you know. When it was real dry, you couldn't do no good.

Q. Why not?

A. The leaves was so dry, dogs couldn't smell them and we'd go way back on the ridge, and Pete and Edgar Lee and the dog he raised a bark way back here about a mile and a half. Pete left me and Don and Larry there and we had just little old coals there and we was setting there and had our shoes off warming our feet and directly an old bobcat come right up right at us and raised a scream just exactly like a woman's scream and it scared me and Larry til I couldn't get ahold of my light to light it to save my soul. Don and Larry had me by the breeches leg saying, 'Oh, Lessie, get that light! get that light!' and when I got it lit then it left. And, we took around that hill around that ridge and through brush and went through briars and fences and everything and we liked to never got to him and Edgar Lee and they had a great big old coon that weighed about 26 pounds.

Q. Did you eat coon?

A. Yes.

Q. What does it taste like?

A. We used to bring Lottie a whole coon. It just tastes something like a groundhog.

Q. What does a groundhog taste like?

A. Well, groundhogs taste more like they're wild, they're like a deer, you know. The meat tastes wild-like.

Q. Did you have to do anything to the meat before you cooked it?

A. Yes. You have to wash it good and cook it with an onion and then cook it with spices and then put it in the stove and bake it. And, then that wild taste wasn't in there.

Q. What game could you get by hunting that was eatable?

A. Squirrels, and rabbits and groundhogs. I never did eat no possum. I never could stand them old things.

Q. Did a lot of people eat possum?

A. Yes. Pete's mother was crazy about them.

Q. How did people fix possum?

A. Pete's mother used to scrap them and put them in the stove and bake them til she got them done and then pile sweet potatoes around them. Let them sweet potatoes cook in that grease. Oh, she could just sit down and let that grease run off her chin!

Q. How many different kinds of greens can you think of that grow wild out in the country?

A. Wild lettuce, shawnee, pissybed, nettle, poke. Boy, I know about everything.

Q. Can you tell the difference in all of them.

A. Oh, yes. I can tell the difference in all of them.

Q. Greens are good for you, aren't they?

A. Yes. You can take shawnee and wilt it just like lettuce that you grow in your garden and it's just as good as any lettuce that ever did grow. Just tender as can be. You get and wilt it like lettuce, put onions.

Q. Did you eat a lot of greens?

A. Yes.

Q. Is there anything else that grew wild out in the woods that you could eat?

A. Oh, yes. Hickory nuts, walnuts, hazel nuts, all kinds of nuts like that.

Q. How about wild fruits?

A. Nothing only apples, peaches, pears and berries.

Q. Pawpaws?

A. Pawpaws. Hope my die I love them things! Dr. Litton told me and Ma one time that he come there and I had four bigguns and Ma had four bigguns. Said, 'are you all going to eat them?', said 'yes, what do you think we got them for?' and he said I never seen nobody eat pawpaws like that. Said, why you'all is going have the pawpawism. I said 'what is that?', he said 'pawpawism.'

This is the conclusion of the interview.